

**IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF TENNESSEE
EASTERN DIVISION**

**IN RE: AME CHURCH EMPLOYEE
RETIREMENT FUND LITIGATION**

MDL Docket No. 1:22-md-03035-STA-jay

ALL CASES

Honorable S. Thomas Anderson

**PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENTS
WITH AME DEFENDANTS AND DEFENDANT NEWPORT GROUP, INC.**

Plaintiffs Reverend Pearce Ewing, Reverend Charles R. Jackson, Reverend Cedric V. Alexander, Reverend Derrell Wade, Reverend Reuben J. Boyd, Presiding Elder Phillip Russ, IV, Lynette Glenn, Guardian of Reverend Marcius King, Reverend Matthew Ewing, Candace L. Carmichael, as Administrator of the Estate of Reverend A. Offord Carmichael, Deceased, and Reverend Diane Conley, on behalf of themselves and others similarly situated, (collectively, ‘Plaintiffs’), and by and through Settlement Class Counsel¹, respectfully move, pursuant to Rule 23 of the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, for final approval of two settlements reached with: (1) Defendants African Methodist Episcopal Church, AMEC Ministerial Retirement Annuity Plan (the “Plan”), African Methodist Episcopal Church Inc., AMEC Department of Retirement Services, AMEC General Board, and AMEC Council of Bishops (collectively, the “AME Defendants”); and (2) Defendant Newport Group, Inc. (“Newport”) in this matter.

¹ In its Order Granting Plaintiff’s Motion for Preliminary Approval of Class Action Settlements with AMEC Defendants and Defendant Newport Group, Inc., the Court appointed Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman, PLLC; Osborne & Francis Law Firm, PLLC; Stranch Jennings Garvey, PLLC; Kantor & Kantor, LLC; Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP; Blue, LLP; Wright & Schulte, LLC; and the AARP Foundation as class counsel for the settlement class. (ECF No. 775 at ¶ 4.)

For the reasons set forth in the accompanying Memorandum of Law, Plaintiffs respectfully move the Court for an order:

1. Granting final approval of both the AME Settlement and the Newport Settlement as fair, adequate, and reasonable and in the best interests of the class under Rule 23(e);
2. Certifying pursuant to Rule 23(b)(3) the following Class for purposes of the Settlements:

Class: All persons who were participants, or were those participants' respective beneficiaries entitled to benefits, in the African Methodist Episcopal Church Ministerial Retirement Annuity Plan on June 30, 2021. Defendants are excluded from the Class.

3. Confirming the appointment of Plaintiffs as Class Representatives for purposes of the Settlements;
4. Confirming the appointment as Class Counsel the law firms of Milberg Coleman Bryson Phillips Grossman, PLLC, Osborne & Francis Law Firm, PLLC, Strach Jennings & Garvey, PLLC, Kantor & Kantor, LLC, Lieff Cabraser Heimann & Bernstein, LLP, Blue, LLP, Wright & Schulte, LLC, and the AARP Foundation for purposes of effectuating the Settlements;
5. Terminating the litigation between Plaintiffs and Settling Defendants;
6. Releasing claims of Settlement Class members against Settling Defendants; and
7. Granting the relief requested in Plaintiffs' Motion for Attorneys' Fees, Costs, and Service Awards from Settlements with AME Defendants and Defendant Newport Group, Inc. filed on May 7, 2025. (ECF No. 806.)

Respectfully submitted, this the 12th day of June 2025.

<u>Interim Co-Lead Counsel</u>	
/s/ Matthew E. Lee Matthew E. Lee MILBERG COLEMAN BRYSON	/s/ Gregorio A. Francis Gregorio A. Francis OSBORNE & FRANCIS

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<p><u>Plaintiff's Steering Committee</u></p>	
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CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

This is to certify that on June 12, 2025, the foregoing **PLAINTIFFS' MOTION FOR FINAL APPROVAL OF CLASS ACTION SETTLEMENTS WITH AME DEFENDANTS AND DEFENDANT NEWPORT GROUP, INC.** was served via the Court's CM/ECF system on all counsel of record.

/s/ Matthew E. Lee
Matthew E. Lee